

Sketch

Volume 70, Number 1

2005

Article 9

To Neruda

Lindsay Labanca*

*Iowa State University

Copyright ©2005 by the authors. *Sketch* is produced by The Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress).
<http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/sketch>

To Neruda

Lindsay Labanca

He wove music from six-pack rings;
he hung coloured ribbons
from bright lamp-posts in May
and sang the cries of tattered leaves
drifting lazy spirals
into dark and restless seas.

A river of blank ink flowed
without direction; his ragged shoes
dug into the pressing current.
The waters darkened, sodden with life.

Should we adore his elevation
of the ordinary to the sublime?
or in our petty pretenses, despise
his ennobling of the rank common?

Artisan weaving words,
whose work rests upon the altars
of the communal soul,
you, sing on from the grave
your humble odes to rambling streams
and muddy barefoot dances.